



MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

PUPIL ABSENCE POLICY

Incorporating

MISSING PUPIL POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy explains the procedures surrounding pupil absences, the procedures followed, and responsibilities of both school and parents. In so doing, it incorporates the Department for Education guidance 'School Attendance', May 2022, and follows requirements laid out in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 (KCSIE 2023) regarding pupils missing education. The policy takes into account the difference between absence and missing education.
- 1.2 The policy incorporates day-to-day absence, procedures following permanent absence of a pupil, procedures in the case of regular unauthorized absence, and procedures in the event of a school emergency.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Parents are responsible for their children getting to school on time and for each day of the published term days in the school year.
- 2.2 Term dates are published at least a year in advance, are available on the school website and in the Red Diary, and any changes within this timeframe will be highlighted through the Usher's Mailing. Changes made will be taken into consideration when it comes to absence requests.
- 2.3 Any measures taken by the school to aid parents in ensuring the attendance of their children, for example the Oxford Schools Bus Partnership, do not imply the school taking on responsibility from parents for getting children to school on time and for each day of the published term days in the school year.
- 2.4 It is the responsibility of pupils in the Senior School to ensure that they register twice per day. Senior School Registration is biometric and registration points are provided not only in houserooms but also in other key locations to ensure that pupils can fulfil commitments, e.g. extra-curricular and community, as well as register on time.
- 2.5 Registration is processed out on a day-to-day basis by the School Administrator in the Usher's Office, under the direct guidance of the Surmaster.

- 2.6 The isams administrator and IT Dept are responsible for ensuring that the Attendance Register is maintained & supported electronically as required by the Surmaster, and the School Roll as required by the Registrar.
- 2.7 The Surmaster and Usher's Office monitor the School Attendance Register and keep the Usher fully appraised of any concerns and actions required.
- 2.8 The Registrar is responsible for maintaining the School Roll and ensuring that it is up to date. A number of staff will typically be informed of changes in the School Roll; the Master, Usher, Deputy Head (Academic) and Bursar, and their offices, will always be kept informed.
- 2.9 The Registrar and Usher are responsible for ensuring that the school's legal obligations with regard to the School Roll are maintained; they will inform Oxford Safeguarding Children Board (and, when appropriate, other local or national authorities) of changes in accordance with safeguarding regulations established by the OSCB (Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board). This is typically done via the Attendance Inclusion Officer, and communication via attendance and admissions email at oxfordshire.gov.uk. The Usher and Registrar are responsible for ensuring that the School is up to date with all such requirements.
- 2.10 The Usher is responsible for Absence Requests and following up unauthorized absences or other matters as appropriate. As appropriate, such matters may be delegated to other members of staff e.g. Heads of Section.

3. DAY TO DAY ABSENCE PROCEDURES

- 3.1 Registration takes place twice per day, in the morning and the afternoon. For absences known in advance, parents should contact the Usher for permission of absence. If possible this should be at least a fortnight before the event. Permission will be granted for major family events such as funerals, weddings of immediate family and significant religious events/festivals. Permission for absence will not normally be granted for anything which might be considered to constitute an extension of holiday. Absences specific to the 6th form, for example driving tests and Open Days, are explained within the Sixth Form Handbook. These are determined by the Usher in consultation with the Sixth Form Team.
- 3.2 For absences on the day, such as illness, parents are required to email attendance@mcsoxford.org to alert the Usher's Office that their child will be absent from school that day. Medical appointments are usually known a little in advance and absence requests for these are conducted in the normal way.
- 3.3 If a pupil is absent from school, and there is no cause known, the Usher's Office is responsible for ascertaining where the pupil is, either in school but not registered or not in school. The appropriate code will be recorded on isams once the pupil's whereabouts

is established.

- 3.4 Registration codes follow the guidance set out in 'School Attendance', May 2022. Parents are able to see their child's attendance on the Parent Portal, and receive a termly summary with their child's report.
- 3.5 If a pupil persistently does not register, or persistently registers late, appropriate action is taken to ensure that registration takes place in a timely and appropriate fashion.
- 3.6 If a pupil cannot be found, and the above procedures have been followed, the Missing Pupil Policy (appended to this document) is followed.
- 3.7 The school should ensure that, if required, the Missing Pupil Policy is put into action as early as possible on any given day.

4. Persistent Absence

- 4.1 The school's Terms and Conditions are the first port of call in the case of Persistent Absence.
- 4.2 At the same time, the school reserves the right to draw up a Parental Contract, under the terms outlined in 'School Attendance Responsibility Measures'. Any such contract is voluntary but non-compliance will be recorded and the information shared with the appropriate authorities.

5. Permanent Absence of a Pupil

- 5.1 It is a requirement to follow OSCB guidance in notification of authorities of the permanent absence of a pupil.
- 5.2 This does not include, nor does this policy refer to, pupils leaving at a standard absence date – typically 16+ or 18+. Whilst the Registrar will ensure that the School Roll is kept up to date at all times, further action is only required when a pupil leaves at a different time.
- 5.3 To fulfil requirements described in KCSIE 2023 (specifically children missing in education), and to ensure the safeguarding of departing pupils, the Usher is responsible for contacting OSCB/Local Authority when a pupil leaves.
- 5.4 The Usher (or Registrar) will provide information as required, which is likely to include some, or all, of the following: the name, address and details of at least one parent of the child; the school which the pupil will henceforth attend; the reason for the pupil leaving; any other safeguarding concerns.

5.5 The Usher will further ensure that safeguarding information is shared with the pupil's new school.

6. Procedures in case of an Emergency

6.1 In certain cases of emergency, it might be necessary for the school to send all pupils home before the normal end of the school day and at immediate notice.

6.2 The School will take all reasonable steps to inform parents of the emergency and the steps taken by the school. These will include communication via email, the website, social media feeds and telephone.

6.3 The school will, in such cases, require pupils to return to their main home address or the emergency address recorded with the school.

6.4 As far as possible, the school will assist with transport to these addresses. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of parents in such circumstances to ensure that pupils make their way from school to these addresses.

MISSING PUPIL POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 **Scope:** This policy applies to all staff (and volunteers) at Magdalen College School. It should be read with the Safeguarding Policy, and has recourse to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2023. The Master and Usher have considerable discretion in the application of this policy.
- 1.2 **Publication:** Parents may request a copy from the School or review the policy on the School website. It is associated with the Safeguarding Policy
- 1.3 **Policy aims:** Through the operation of this policy we aim to:
 - 1.3.1 protect the health and safety of all pupils at the School;
 - 1.3.2 ensure that School staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 The Governors delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day-to-day management of the School to the Master. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the School by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the School policies. Schools are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent. Any member of staff who notices a pupil is missing, or sees a pupil in a place where the pupil should not be, has a duty to inform the Usher's Office without delay. If this is impossible, they should inform the relevant tutor, Head of Year (HoY), Head of Section (HoS) or other senior member of staff as soon as possible.

3. PROCEDURE FOR PUPIL MISSING DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

- 3.1 In the event of a member of staff suspecting a pupil is unaccounted for, they should first check the register on isams. If the pupil is recorded as present at school, the member of staff should inform the Usher's Office and in particular the School Administrator.
- 3.2 An initial search will be organised by the Usher's Office, with the assistance of others, such as reception, as required. This will include:
 - Checking the pupil's timetable and whether he/she could be in the library, music lesson or other 'off-timetable' commitment, as well as school trip lists for the day if applicable
 - Checking with the medical centre to see whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment

- Contact staff i/c last activity
- Contact the tutor, HoY, HoS or other senior member of staff to initiate and engage in further searches
- If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the School staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to the School. If the pupil refuses to do so, staff members at the scene will attempt to continue to monitor the pupil's whereabouts. Staff should consider contacting the parents in such circumstances.
- If the pupil is not found after initial searches, the Usher (who is also the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, the relevant HOS who is also a deputy DSL, will contact the pupil's parents at this point and the situation must be reported to the Master's Advisory Committee along with the relevant details. All decisions on contacting parents should be made by the Usher or, in their absence, a HoS.
- If the initial search is unsuccessful, the Usher will contact the police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate) and provide the police with the information listed in section 4, as well as any other information reasonably requested by the police. A decision will be taken in accordance with the School's child protection policy and procedures as to whether the School should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures.

4. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE POLICE

4.1 When the School contacts the Police during the day or night, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing

- any relevant comments made by the pupil

4.2 The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the School should be necessary.

5. REVIEW

5.1 This policy shall be reviewed every year by the Usher as part of the School's annual review of safeguarding and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review the Usher will take into account any recorded incidents that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the School and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.

6. MISSING PUPIL RECORDS

6.1 The School will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil including:

- the pupil's name
- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing)
- the action taken to find the pupil
- whether the Police or Social Services were involved
- outcome or resolution of the incident
- any reasons given by the pupil for being missing
- any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident
- a record of the staff involved

6.2 A full written record of the incident will be kept on the pupil's electronic file.

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Author	Usher
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Reviewer	Usher